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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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HOUSING CONDITIONS

1. I lived at Rubezhnoye, a city with a population of about 17,000, from 1946 to 1951. There were 23 German families in the city during my stay. They had come from East Germany at the order of the USSR. The city was located on the left bank of the Donets River, about three kilometers from its bank. The floods in the spring caused swampy land. The surrounding woods had lakes which were fed by the melting snows. The ground around the city was sandy.
2. Housing in the city was furnished by large apartment blocks and some wooden houses. The apartment blocks were four-story, stone, sixty-unit blocks which were in the center of the city. In the surrounding areas were the one and two-family wooden houses. My family, which consisted of my wife, [redacted] daughter and myself, was assigned a unit consisting of two rooms, a kitchen, lavatory and toilet. We were especially favored because the average Soviet family was assigned just one room. Only the more important Soviets received more than one room of living space for their families.
3. The only transportation from the city was by train. The river was not navigable. No regular air transport was available. However, sport

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planes occasionally landed at Liskhimstroy, a village about ten kilometers south of Rubezhnoye. I recall that a two-seat, bi-plane once transported a sick man from the area to a large, nearby city.

FOOD SUPPLY

4. During the first year of my stay in Rubezhnoye, the area suffered from a famine which was caused, in part, by a prolonged dry season. Potatoes were especially scarce in this period. In later years the food situation became better but was never adequate.
5. The average diet of the people consisted of black, sour, moist bread; corn; sunflower seeds or oil; beans; pumpkins; fish and certain vegetables in season. These were frequently cooked in the form of a stew. Because of the large land area around the city a worker was assigned a 100 meter stretch of ground for his own use on which he was permitted to grow whatever he desired. This enabled the people to meet their food requirements. The vegetables in the area included corn, tomatoes, carrots and cabbage. Some of these were pickled for winter use.
6. Unpasteurized milk was sold in open containers from door to door or in the market place (or bazaar). Sour milk or cream was especially liked by the people, who used it in making soups. Pasteurized milk was sold in the government store. At the factory, the chemists were given 250 cc. of milk per day because their work was regarded as hazardous to health.
7. Fish from the river and small, salted sardine-like fish were available in the market place. The people ate quantities of raw, salted or dried fish.
8. All kinds of meat, beef, pork, lamb and sausages were also sold but were not consumed in any quantity. Sunflower oil was the type of fat consumed. Butter was usually unavailable. Vitamin tablets were regularly sold in the stores.
9. I do not know what food inspection laws were enforced. Meat sold in the bazaar had to bear a stamp of approval, and there was an official stand in the market place which checked to see if this regulation was observed. Pigs sold in the bazaar had to be slaughtered at a public slaughterhouse. In this connection, I noted that the Soviets castrated both male and female young pigs for meat animals.
10. Although food inspection and food-outlet inspection ordinances existed, no inspections were carried out to my knowledge. I recall one occasion in 1946 when a batch of herring, imported from Canada, was found to be spoiled. I have no further information on this case.

WATER SUPPLY

11. The water supply was obtained from springs or from the ground. Wells were located on top of the swampy area near the river bank and were very productive. The sandy earth served as an excellent purifier of the water. River water itself was never needed. The central water works were located on the northwest edge of the city. I do not know whether the city water was chlorinated, nor whether any tests were carried out to check its purity. It was not necessary to boil the water for drinking, and it always had a good, fresh taste.

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12. The water supply became less plentiful in summer, and at that time there was not sufficient pressure to furnish the upper floors of the higher situated apartment houses with an adequate supply. Within the city center two artesian wells were set up and were always running.
13. Not all the dwellings were connected to the central water supply. The apartment houses had running water, but the wooden houses outside of the city center employed wells.

MEDICAL CARE

14. The city had a first-aid station, skoraya pomoshch, located in two rooms of one of the stone houses next to the bazaar. This always had a physician and two nurses on duty. When first-aid was needed, a telephone call to this station would produce help.
15. A polyclinic was also located in the main street at the bazaar. It occupied about eight rooms and was staffed by various specialists, viz., one internist, one obstetrician-gynecologist, one general practitioner, one dentist (stomatologist) and two dental technicians. 50X1-HUM
16. The city's hospital was located at the north end of the city in a stone barracks. I do not know how many beds it had. [redacted] the Soviet roentgenologist of the hospital was of high caliber. The hospital surgeon had a good reputation. This hospital was also for patients from the countryside around Rubezhnoye. [redacted] a Soviet ophthalmologist in nearby Liskhimstroy, whom the people could consult for needed assistance. This man was alleged to have been sent to Liskhimstroy, which was a small town, as a punishment or exile for some offense in the past. 50X1-HUM
17. A very primitive maternity hospital was available in the city. It had two inferior female doctors. The place was dirty, fly-infested and its food was poor. Patients relied on friends to send food to them. Visits to this hospital were prohibited.
18. A separate hospital for children was maintained by the health authorities. In 1951 the city constructed a big, four-story hospital for the people which was to improve the available facilities very much.
19. Bacteriological tests required by physicians in Rubezhnoye were sent to a laboratory in Voroshilovgrad by train. Simple blood tests were made at the factory and city polyclinics.
20. The chemical factory had its own polyclinic for the employees. It was staffed by three female physicians and a female dentist. My impression was that these physicians were conscientious and capable of giving good medical advice. The polyclinic rendered only minor assistance to the workers, e.g., bandaging of wounds, application of heat therapy and simple industrial care.
21. A pharmacy shop was located in the city in the polyclinic area. I do not believe that the installation [redacted] employed the services of a safety engineer. Each shop-leader was responsible for accident prevention in his area. There was a group who checked the shops for fire hazards to remove the possible causes of fire. The employees themselves had little to say about working conditions. As pointed out above the chemical workers received extra rations of milk because their jobs were considered hazardous. This rationing was not always enforced. 50X1-HUM

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Medical Supplies

22. All workers in the factory were administered a vaccine for protection against typhoid and intestinal diseases each year. This was administered in a single dose. Families of workers were supposedly required to receive this immunization, but the authorities did not enforce this program.
23. In 1950 the Soviet physicians had penicillin in aqueous solution for their use. They had not yet obtained in 1951, a depot-type penicillin. Sulfa drugs most used were prontosil album, prontosil rubrum and sulfapyridine. The Germans were permitted to write to East Germany to request sulfa drugs from their homes, but these requests could not be fulfilled by the East Germans because they were also experiencing a great shortage of sulfa drugs.
24. I know of no pharmaceutical factories in the Rubezhnoye area. The chemical factory manufactured PAS. There was a medical supplies depot in Voroshilovgrad to which requests were forwarded from Rubezhnoye whenever new stocks were needed.
25. Patients were expected to purchase with their private funds whatever drugs were prescribed by the attending physician. In addition to the city pharmacy, a small stand was set up in the bazaar at which items such as iodine, aspirin, pyramidon and caffeine were sold at free prices. This was run by the pharmacy store and was open even on Sunday. I believe the pharmacy store was expected to maintain a definite sales record and use this bazaar stand to increase its drug sales to meet the sales quota expected of it. Most common drugs and drug-packaging improved steadily between 1946 and 1951. I never heard of the use of blood transfusions in the city.

MEDICAL TRAINING

26. There were no schools for training of medical personnel in Rubezhnoye. A feldsher school was available in Voroshilovgrad, but I have no information about it.
27. Within the factory the Red Cross carried on a training program to instruct the women workers in first aid. I have no further information about it.

DISEASES

28. I have little information on disease incidence at Rubezhnoye. Cases of mild malaria were frequently reported. Tuberculosis was apparently very widespread. Intestinal disorders, such as dysentery or diarrhea were commonly contracted. In 1947 several cases of typhus were reported to have occurred among Hungarian or Rumanian inmates of a prisoner-of-war camp nearby. The city inhabitants were not affected.
29. I heard of no epidemics. I do not know what form of dysentery occurred in Rubezhnoye. Scarlet fever incidence was occasionally high. I heard of no anthrax, brucellosis, bovine TB or other animal diseases. However, I do not believe that I am qualified to report on this subject.

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BW

30. I heard nothing concerning Soviet preparations for offensive or defensive bacteriological warfare. The city heard propaganda concerning the BW trials at Khabarovsk in 1947 or 1948.

ANIMALS

31. The area had some mosquitoes which were probably malaria transmitters. I heard that a mild form of malaria was contracted by German PW's who were living in a nearby PW camp. Bedbugs were present in fantastic numbers. The houses were subjected to a delousing process; hence lice were not prevalent. However, many of the people harbored lice because of the lack of soap and underwear. Black cockroaches and brown "Prussian" cockroaches were frequently seen.
32. Large numbers of rats infested the city but the people were undisturbed by their presence and did nothing to eliminate them. The families kept cats to combat the rodents in their homes.
33. Apparently wolves roamed the surrounding area. Wild dogs were also seen. However because of the anxiety of the authorities concerning possible spread of rabies, a regulation provided that dogs had to be licensed. A twice-yearly search was made for non-registered dogs which were then destroyed. Whenever individuals were bitten by dogs, a rabies vaccine was immediately administered. The local people stated that poisonous snakes were in the area but were uncertain of the type. It is probable that they referred to vipers or adders.
34. I know of no poisonous fishes in the Donets River, or in the lakes. The people swam in these waters regularly.

PLANTS

35. I heard of no poisonous or allergenic plants in the area.

WASTE DISPOSAL

36. The city had a sewage disposal system which serviced the stone apartment houses. I am not certain of the procedure by which sewage was disposed. I believe that it was piped to cesspools and also to a large settling basin on the northern rim of the city, close to the Donets River. The sewage was certainly not emptied directly into the river without some prior decontamination. Effluent from the factory was probably emptied into a lake which afforded some biological purification. The wooden houses employed either cesspools or outdoor latrines which were maintained by the individual residents.
37. Garbage bins were provided for the apartment blocks. They were usually large 1 m. x 1 m. x 1.5 m. and were emptied regularly into trucks by a municipal service.

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